

Johnston (Station) Historical Society

Volume 23, Issue 2

Newsletter

Summer 2015

From the President

With the arrival of summer, the historical society board members have been very busy. The painting has now been completed by Peterson Painting and it looks great.

Carla Johns has been busy weeding the flower beds, thinning the perennials, and planting more flowers. Deb Krambeck has helped some on this labor intensive task. There are many people that walk the grounds admiring the flower beds. There is always something in bloom.

The new front storm door was donated by the Johnston class of 1964 and has been installed by Al Lathrum. What a nice improvement, plus it protects the interior door.

Al and his friend, Rob Wilkening, spent a day installing a new hot water heater. We thank the Plumb Supply Corporation for their donation. It's nice to have warm water now for cleaning the museum or simply washing our hands.

Cont. on pg. 2



Garage Sale Fundraiser July 17 & 18

Our third annual Garage Sale is just around the corner. This is our main fundraiser of the year so we need your discarded items. We are collecting items now to place in the garage sale. We will provide a receipt for your donation.

If you wish to donate items, there will be someone at the museum to collect them on Mon., Wed. and Thurs. from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. If those times do not work for you, please call Nancy Budrevich at 515 255-4030. You can also call the museum at 515 331-0687 and leave a message to schedule a delivery time that works for you. You can also bring them on Thursday, July 16 directly to the Simpson Barn.

Annual Chili Supper November 5, 2015

Be sure to mark your calendars for this year's chili supper on Thursday, November 5, 2015. It will be held from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the lower level of the Simpson Barn.

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We are preparing for the Garage (Barn) Sale. Board members have been pricing, sorting, and cleaning items to be placed in the sale.

Thank you for your support, and stop by and visit us. I think you will be pleased at what you see.

Lois Waggoner, President

Website

Keith Westbrook, our webpage/computer specialist has our site up and running. He has introduced two forms. One is titled, "Tell us Your Story." The other is a form to submit your name to volunteer at the museum.

We are always looking for someone to give us their story. Perhaps you have lived in Johnston and would like to share your memories. If that's not something you care to write, one of our board members would be happy to meet with you and write it for you. We all have a story to tell and we would like to know yours.

Also, volunteering can be quite rewarding so perhaps you would consider giving a couple hours a week to help at museum.

Go to www.johnstoniowahistorical.org and check us out.

Annual Member Meeting

Our annual membership meeting and open house was held at the museum on Sunday, April 12, 2015 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

We were joined by two members and three guests who enjoyed our refreshments. Financials and board meeting minutes were provided to members.

Donations

Below are the individuals/foundations who have donated to the work of preserving the history of Johnston since the last newsletter. We would like to recognize these individuals:

Mr. and Mrs John Brown
Daisy & Button Quester Chapter #637

The Board of Directors would like to thank each of you for your generous donation. The Johnston Historical Society could not survive and continue to preserve the valuable history at the museum without you.

Donations of Materials and Time

- Storm door donated by the Class of 1964, installed by classmate, Al Lathrum.
- Hot water heater donated by Plumb Supply Corp., installed by Al Lathrum and Rob Wilkening.
- Flowers donated by Piney Ridge Greenhouse, planted by Carla Johns and Deb Krambeck.
- Paint for windows and trim donated by Pittsburgh Paints.
- Shelving for computer room donated by Jan Jensen, installed by Jan and Jerry Jensen and Keith Westbrook.
- Software donated by Keith Westbrook

One of the best gifts of all is the gift of time which many of our board members give unselfishly to running the museum.

The pictures on the following page show some of the changes to the museum. These include the new storm door, removal of the old railing, the new porch floor and the newly painted windows and columns. Featured also is the new wrought iron hand rails on the front steps.



July 2010



June 2015

The McGovern Family



**Frank, Sara, Jesse, Emma, Tom, and Marion McGovern
in front of their home.**

Many of you may remember the McGoverns, Sara and Frank, who both worked for the Johnston Schools in the 1940's and 1950's. I remember them well, so I was somewhat surprised when approached by a man with the name of Wes Jordan regarding his grandparents, the McGoverns. The following is Wes' account of his memories of his grandparents and times spent at their home. That house still exists. It is on the southwest corner of NW 61st Ave. (Otto Road) and NW 59th Ct.

Frank was born July 20, 1892 in South Dakota. He had two sisters and a brother. He migrated to Iowa where he met and later married his

sweetheart, Sara Maxwell, who was born in Maxwell, Iowa in 1896. He was a relative of congressman, George McGovern of South Dakota.

Frank worked at the Ford Plant in Des Moines, which later became Solar Aircraft. He became employed with the Johnston Schools around 1940, where he retired as the head custodian in 1957. Frank loved the children and often saved unclaimed lost and found clothing to give to needy children at the school.

Sara was a homemaker, later working at the Johnston Schools, retiring in 1955 from the head cook position in the kitchen. Wes remembers the food canning events she had at her home where everyone helped.

Together they had four children: Emma, Tom, Jesse, and Marion.

The McGovern's daughter, Emma, married Wesley Jordan. They had four children: Patricia, Wesley (Wes), Shirley and Carolyn. Wesley, the father, was a carpenter and Emma a homemaker. Wesley and Emma lived with her parents, Frank and Sara McGovern, in Johnston for about two years. Wes, the grandson of Sara and Frank, and who we will refer to as "Wes" for the remainder of the story, was born in the small house on NW 62nd Avenue just west of the Allender house, where the McGoverns lived at the time. That house is still there. Wes also remembers living on "Kinsey Corner," at the corner of NW 62nd and Beaver Avenue.

Wes started school at Johnston in 1941 and then attended school in Des Moines for grades 3, 4 and 5. They moved to Texas for about one and a half years, then back to Johnston where he attended junior high. He would later move to Des Moines' south side and it was at Lincoln High School that he received his high school diploma. The nickname given him at this time by his friends was Bud or Buddy.

Wes continued to maintain Johnston connections. He went into the Army. He later attended Grand View and Drake, where he graduated with an accounting degree. He worked various jobs as a comptroller and had his own CPA business for 5 years. However, most of us would know his name more recently as the owner of Jordan Motors on Merle Hay Road from 1986 until he sold it in 2007.

Wes shared that his grandparents, Sara and Frank, often had family picnics in their yard, where he has many fond memories. Wes also comes from a musical family, even playing the steel guitar in a family band. He still dabbles in the guitar and plays a little at church on occasion.

Tom, the second child of Sara and Frank, graduated from Johnston in 1935. He lived in the Des Moines area, was married and had five children. He worked for the city of Des Moines. He was part owner of the Budweiser tent at the Iowa State Fair. Most of his family worked at the fair. He loved miniature horses and had show horses complete with buggy and gear.

Jesse never married and lived with his parents for his entire life. He worked at the Solar Aircraft plant and had various night watch jobs.

Marion, the youngest of the McGovern four, graduated from Johnston with the class of 1942. Marion joined the Army and was a part of World War II. After high school, Cpl. Marion M. McGovern became a bugler in the Army, but also saw heavy action as a frontline rifleman in three major Pacific campaigns. Because he was wounded in the war, he was awarded two purple hearts.

While the McGovern's son, Marion, attended Johnston High School, he wrote a poem that I would like to include in this story, not only because it is a superb poem, but because it speaks volumes to the maturity level of a young Johnston High School student in 1941. With war all around us today, it seems fitting even now, although the wars of today are fought in a different fashion (or are they?). As you read this poem, think about those times and the knowledge that this young man had in a period of no TV's and mass media as we know today.

SHELL SHOCK

You sit in a chair and your thoughts get away,
Taking you back to that hideous day,
You're standing in a trench knee deep in dead,
And you see the blood flowing from a wounded guy's head.

And out of the night comes a terrible blast,
And you see your flag fall down to half-mast,
And up in the air you see enemy planes,
And bombs in the air are like storms when it rains.

You hear the roaring of motors and the sounds of the guns,
You see a plane dive and everyone runs.
Where a chill on your spine at the voices that yell,
And the bombs that are dropped are like fire from hell.

You come to your senses and you're shaking all over,
Like you just fought on the wide waters of Dover.
You try to call out but your voice isn't there,
And you try to get up but you're glued to the chair.

You pray to God that this vision will go,
And He'll snap you out of this vision of woe.
Your muscles relax and your voice returns,
But your stomach still feels like it's been beaten by churns.

When finally it leaves, and you lie down to rest,
You know that by Him, your life has been blest.

Written by Marion Marvin McGovern, Johnston Cons. High School, Johnston, IA

A footnote by Marion read: *I have written this poem in honor of the boys who are fighting in the current war, and to those who fought in previous wars, to keep America free for Democracy. To you and to them I give this poem.*

Sara and Frank moved to California after retiring from their jobs at the Johnston Schools and both died in the year 1964 about six months apart. They are buried in northern Des Moines in Highland Memory Gardens Cemetery.

Information provided by Wes Jordan and written by Deborah (Robinette) Krambeck

Johnston High School Soccer

We congratulate the Johnston High School soccer team who went into the semi-finals undefeated on Friday, June 5. They were the top ranked team, favored to take the state title. Unfortunately, Johnston lost to Linn-Mar 2-1, the very team they beat last year in the semifinal round. This was the third time in five seasons that Johnston has been beat .

We think you have no reason to hang your heads. Many teams would like to have your accomplishments and make it to the semifinals. You did well.

Farmers Market

The Johnston Farmers Market has now opened for the season. Lois set up our table and tent to advertise the Johnston Historical Society the second week. She plans on setting up twice each month.

Although the interest to join by those market shoppers seems low, we feel it is in our best interest to keep our visibility out there. We do get a lot of curious shoppers wondering where we are and what we are about.

Terra Lake Development in Johnston

The city of Johnston is developing a recreational area at 6300 Pioneer Parkway. Phase one, the creation of an 8 acre lake has been completed. The 200-acre Terra Lake area, which used to serve as a retention lagoon, will be used for fishing, gatherings, concerts and other events. Now, in phase two, construction workers are focusing on building a civic shelter and plaza, a trail connection and a fishing pier on the east edge of the lake. This phase is expected to be completed in December 2015. Additionally, there are plans to reconstruct the nearby Crown Point Community Center parking lot and to reconstruct a section of the nearby regional trail.

This spring, the parks department will be stocking the lake with large-mouth bass, followed by bluegill and channel catfish. The fish will need at least three years to grow and acclimate before fishing will begin. The parks department also wants to work with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to bring rainbow trout to the lake. The fishing lake will be surrounded by a lawn for concerts and games. There will also be a handicapped-accessible playground.

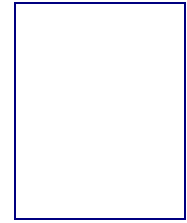
Obituaries

Obituaries are compiled by Nancy Budrevich. If anyone knows of others, please let Nancy know. Nancy can be contacted by mail: 6161 Northglenn Dr., Johnston, IA, 50131; by email: jshs@q.com; or by phone: 515-331-0687. Over 1,000 Johnston related obituaries are now on file at the museum.

In the last newsletter, the listing for Paul Willcockson was incorrectly listed as a Johnston graduate. Paul was a resident of Johnston, not a graduate and his date of death was 12-9-14. Our apologies to the family and thank you to JoAnn, who brought the error to our attention.

Name	Relationship to Johnston	Date of Death
Forrest Olcott	Class of 1967	1-08-15
Jimmie Lee Brooks	Class of 1957	4-10-15
Erika Joy Sheldahl	Class of 2003	4-20-15
Shelby Rose Hughes	Class of 2015	5-06-15
Helen Bauman Fogelson	Class of 1945	5-22-15
Jon Schuler	Class of 1962	6-05-15
Matthew McCulley	Class of 2016	6-11-15
Irene Mary Michels	Resident	4-01-15
Bonita Drew	Resident	4-02-15
Deania May Sale	Resident	4-06-15
Kenneth Krueger	Resident	5-08-15
Margaret Rhodes	Resident	5-09-15
Glenn Joens	Resident	5-17-15
Gloria Ann Jacobson	Resident	5-25-15
Beverly Bellile	Resident	5-25-15
Jack Nutter	Resident	5-25-15
Gary Ross	Resident	5-26-15
Cynthia Johnson	Resident	5-30-15
Mary Lou Peterson	Resident	6-01-15

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6161 Northglenn Dr
Johnston, IA 50131



Johnston Historical Board Members

Lois Waggoner, President
Deb Krambeck, Secretary
Jan Jensen, Archivist
Alan Lathrum, Membership

Nancy Budrevich, Vice President
Carla Johns, Treasurer
Marilyn Coonley, Membership

Museum phone: 515-331-0687
Website: www.johnstoniowahistorical.org

Mark Your Calendars

Society Events

July 17-18, 2015 Annual Garage Sale in the Simpson Barn 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday
and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday
November 5, 2015 Annual Chili Supper in the Simpson Barn 5 to 7 p.m.

City Events

May 19-Oct 6, 2015 Johnston Farmers Market each Tuesday 3:30 to 6:30 p.m.
in the City Hall parking lot
September 25, 2015 Art in the Barn 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Simpson Barn